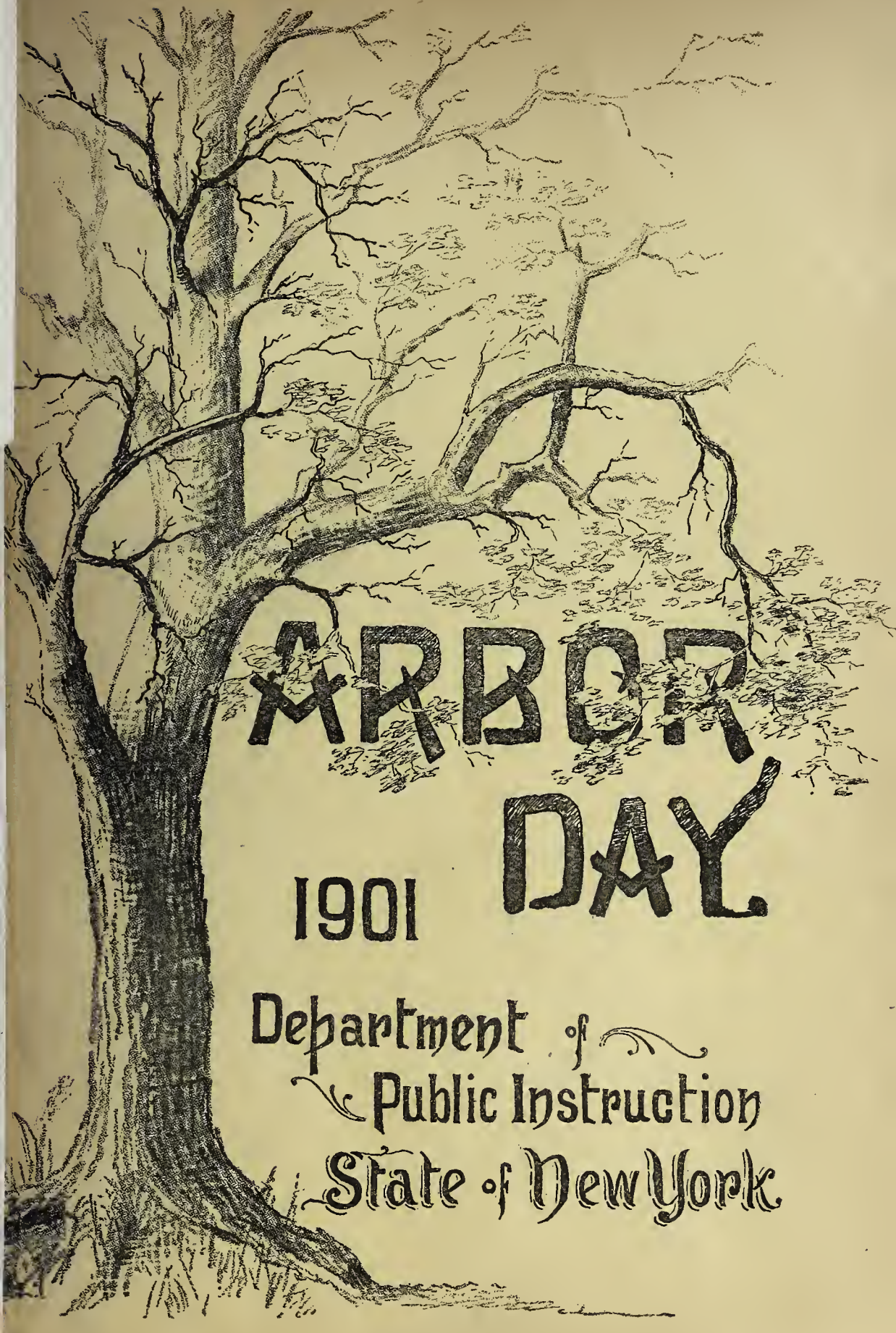


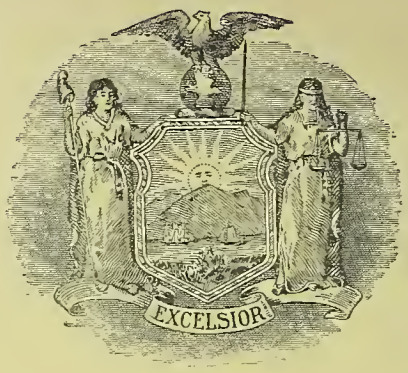
ARBOR DAY

1901

Department of Public Instruction

State of New York

Arbor Day, May 3, 1901



State flower – THE ROSE.

State tree – THE MAPLE.

Consult previous annuals for suggestions and literary extracts.

Prizes for the Best Kept District School Grounds

Through the liberality of William A. Wadsworth, of Geneseo, N. Y., the Superintendent of Public Instruction is enabled to offer, as in 1890 and 1891, cash prizes of $100 for the best, and $50 for the second best kept school grounds in the state. Competition is open to all the district schools of the state.

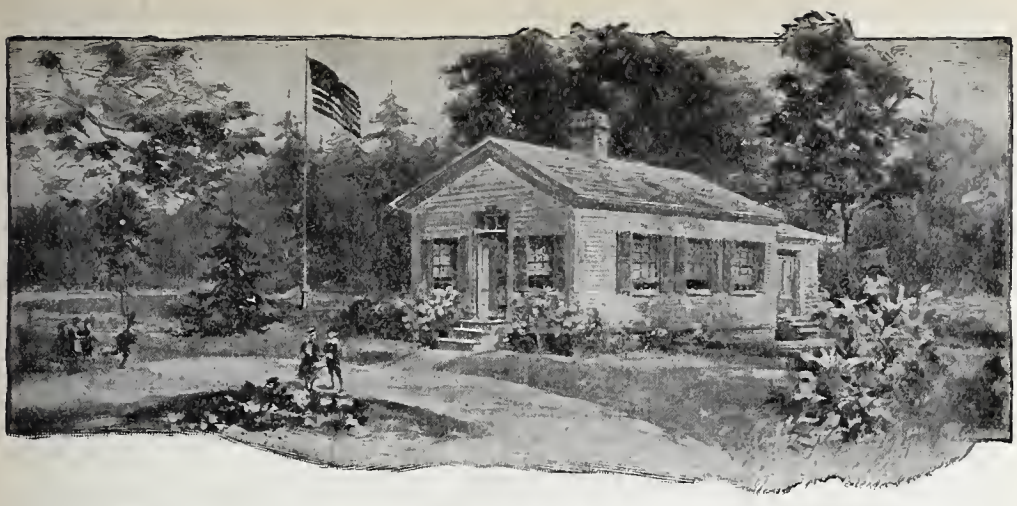
The manner of awarding the prizes will be as follows: A photograph or photographs of the school grounds must be taken sufficiently large to afford a fair opportunity of judging. Accompanying must be a statement as to when the photograph was taken, and a diagram with full explanation concerning the location and character of walks, the kind and condition of fences, the location and kinds of trees and shrubs.

The statement and diagrams are to be made by trustees of school districts competing, indorsed by the school commissioner having jurisdiction, and, together with photograph or photographs, forwarded to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction before October 1, 1901. They will then be referred to a committee for examination, and upon the report of the committee will be determined what districts are to receive the prizes.

Announcement of the award of prizes will be made through the public press, and prizes will be forwarded promptly to those entitled to receive them.

In this connection it is recommended that teachers invite pupils to present for exhibition in their several schools, drawings of school grounds, with suggestions as to how they may be improved or beautified. If possible, let local prizes be offered for best efforts in this direction.

The annuals are reprinted each year in annual reports.



SUGGESTIONS

Full instructions regarding preparation of programs and planting of trees have been given in previous annuals, with suggestive programs.

It is a good idea to let the pupils vote on the tree or ivy to be planted, and then appoint two or three of them to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the beauty, utility, and general characteristics of whatever is selected, and report in an essay or talk on the subject on Arbor day.

Do not let the children of the city schools feel that the lack of school grounds keeps them from the observance of Arbor day. Find some hardy ivy that will climb on the walls of the building and make the school house less bare and forbidding.

In the country districts let the children bring shrubs and plants and extend Arbor day all during the spring. If patriotic selections are desired as a part of the program, see the "Manual of Patriotism".

The programs outlined in the annual are suggestive only. Vary to suit time, conditions, and grades, and do not hesitate to include new ideas which may suggest themselves.

THE BLUE-BIRD

When Nature made the blue-bird she wished to propitiate both the sky and the earth, so she gave him the color of the one on his back and the hue of the other on his breast, and ordained that his appearance in spring should denote that the strife and war between the two elements was at an end. He is the peace harbinger; in him the celestial and terrestrial strike hands and are fast friends. He means the furrow and he means the warmth; he means all the soft, waving influences of the spring on the one hand, and the retreating footsteps of winter on the other. After you have seen the blue-bird you will see no more cold, no more snow, no more winter. He brings soft skies and the ruddy brown of the fields. It is sure to be a bright March morning when you first hear his note; and it is as if the milder influences of above had found a voice and let a word fall upon the ear, so tender it is and so prophetic, a hope tinged with a regret.

John Burroughs

The hearty co-operation of school officers and teachers in the proper observance of Arbor day is the only way by which can be accomplished the purpose of the state law which has set apart one day in every year for tree-planting by the pupils in our public schools. Through the efforts of the schools, every school district will not only contribute to the work of making the whole state more beautiful but also to that of repairing the almost incomprehensible damage done to commerce and navigation, to health and safety, by the destruction of our forests.

The benefits to be secured from broad comprehension and intelligent action in the matter of tree-planting are concisely stated by the Hon. George P. Marsh, the first advocate of tree-planting in this country, who says, "The objects of the restoration of the forests are as multifarious as the motives which have led to their destruction, and as the evils which that destruction has occasioned. The planting of the mountains will diminish the frequency and violence of river inundations; prevent the formation of torrents; mitigate the extremes of atmospheric temperature, humidity, and precipitation; restore dried-up springs, rivulets, and sources of irrigation; shelter the field from chilling and parching winds; prevent the spread of miasmatic effluvia; and finally, furnish an inexhaustible and self-renewing supply of material indispensable to so many purposes of domestic comfort, to the successful exercise of every art of peace, every destructive energy of war."

A few years ago, it was computed that the country's supply of timber was being depleted at least twice as fast as it was being reproduced, and that if stringent measures were not taken, the supply would cease entirely in a comparatively few years.

The trees planted by the public school pupils are but a beginning; the influence of the general observance will be lasting and cumulative. If this interest is sufficiently awakened the children will not be content to stop with Arbor day proper, but will arouse active interest in arboriculture in their families and in the community. Tree-planting will extend throughout the entire season suitable to that purpose, and be alike the work of private individuals and public benefactors, to the enrichment of every village, town, and city.

Nor is that all — for as so beautifully expressed by George William Curtis, "As the children cease to be children they will feel the spiritual and refining influence, the symbolical beauty of the trees. The thoughtful youth will see a noble image of the strong man struggling with obstacles that he overcomes, in a great tree wrestling mightily with the wintry gales, and extorting a glorious music from the storms which it triumphantly defies."

May the observance of the day become universal, bringing with it to each young life the beauty and tenderness, the strength and nobility of nature.

Faithfully yours

Charles R. Skinner

SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER TO THE CHILDREN OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE EMPIRE STATE:

It is a great pleasure to me to-day to think of you all assembling to plant trees in celebration of the returning spring and this glad Arbor day; to know that you too are members of Beecher's great tree-loving fraternity, loving trees with universal and unfeigned love, and all things that do grow under them or around them — the whole leaf and root tribe. Nor must we overlook the birds, our little brothers of the air, nor fail to be kind to them and protect them — they who love the trees too, and help to make the spring beautiful.

This one long, glorious day has been set apart for you to listen to all the wonderful tales nature can tell you, to take from her the beauty and joyfulness and caressing tenderness she has ready for all who love her, and to learn to interpret her changing moods through the great writers whose words have been inspired by her. These followers of hers will help you to know her better and will be to you at all times true and desirable companions.

And in return, you will plant trees or vines or shrubs or flowers in your school grounds, helping to make them attractive and beautiful. To each one of you belongs the duty of seeing that these are properly tended, a duty that will become a genuine pleasure. When once you experience the satisfaction and fascination of watching growth in nature, you will want to plant something for your very own, something that will grow with you and become an example to you.

Besides the pleasure which the companionship and beauty of trees can bring, there is also the need of them for all that goes to make up the life of the nation. There is a German proverb which says, "Whatever you would have appear in the nation's life, you must introduce into the public schools," and some one wisely concluded, "train the youth into a love for trees, instruct them in the elements of forestry and the wisdom of this old proverb will be realized." And so to you, my young friends, has been given this duty and privilege of adding to each school district and to the entire state the beauty, the inspiration, and the impetus to culture and development that come from trees.

Irving says, "There is something nobly simple and pure in a taste for the cultivation of forest trees. It argues, I think, a sweet and generous nature. He who plants an oak, looks forward to future ages, and plants for posterity. Nothing can be less selfish than this."

Your sincere friend



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I desire to make special acknowledgment of the courtesy extended by Perry Mason & Company, publishers of the *Youth's Companion*, Boston, Mass., for the use of illustrations contained in this annual, and for copies of a pamphlet entitled "Beautify the school grounds," which have been furnished me in a sufficient quantity to supply a copy to each school district in the state.

The *Youth's Companion* has a constituency of more than a half million readers, and is doing a most commendable service in inspiring school children and school officers to give more attention to improving and beautifying the schoolhouses and school grounds of the country.

PROGRAM I

I Opening exercises — Reading from the scriptures or other appropriate writings
II Song
III Reading the Arbor day law
IV Superintendent's letter to school officers and teachers
V Song
VI Recitation — "The awakening year" - - - *Thomas Buchanan Read*
or "May" - - - - - - - - - - *J. G. Percival*
VII Reading — "Spring" - - - - - - - - - *Longfellow*
VIII Recitation — "The tree" - - - - - - - - - - *Jones Very*
IX Superintendent's letter to the children of the public schools
X Song
XI Essay — "Why we chose to plant....."
XII Recitation — "Birds in summer" - - - - - - *Mrs Hemans*
XIII Class exercise — "Famous and curious trees"
XIV Planting trees or shrubs
XV Closing song

PROGRAM II

I Opening exercises — Reading from the scriptures or other appropriate writings
II Reading the Arbor day law
III Song
IV Superintendent's letter to school officers and teachers
V Class exercise — "A flock of birds" - - - - - *Annie Chase*
VI Recitation — "Plant a tree" - - - - - - - - *Lucy Larcom*
VII Recitation — "The rose" - - - - - - - - - - *Moore*
or "The return of the birds" - - - - - - - - *Bryant*
VIII Song
IX Superintendent's letter to the children of the public schools
X Recitation — "The daffodils" - - - - - - - - *Wordsworth*
or "May" - - - - - - - - - - - *Eben Rexford*
XI Reading — "Arbor day — Its educating influence" - *B. G. Northrop*
XII Marching song
XIII Reading — "The blue bird" - - - - - - - *John Burroughs*
XIV Planting trees or shrubs
XV Closing song

A good law without execution is like an unperformed promise.
Jeremy Taylor

ARBOR DAY

Its educating influence

The observance of Arbor day has already led to the planting of myriads of trees in this country. Important as is this result, the educating influence of this work is of still higher value. One of these educating forces begins when children are thus led to plant not only trees, but tree-seeds, acorns, nuts, drupe-stones or pits, and then to observe the wonderful miracles which the tree-life they have started is working out before them. What interest and profit, what growth of mind and heart they will gain, as they watch the mysterious forces of these living germs, this marvelous assimilating power, carrying on a curious chemistry in their underground laboratory, linked with the mysterious apparatus of the leaves above, transforming coarse earth and even offensive filth into living forms of surpassing beauty and fragrance. It is something for a child who has dropped such a germ into the earth, to feel that he has made a lasting contribution to the natural beauty around him, for there is nothing more ennobling than the consciousness of doing something for future generations which may prove a growing benefaction in coming years — a better monument than any in bronze or marble. The trees which children plant around the homestead and watch from seed to shoot, from bud to limb, and from flowers to fruit, will be increasingly prized with a sentiment of companionship and almost of kinship as they grow into living memorials of happy, youthful days. Thus, the educating influences of Arbor day will manifest themselves more and more as the years go by, especially to all who apply Dr Holmes' advice, and "make trees monuments of history and character" or appreciate his saying, "I have written many verses, but the best poems I have produced, are the trees I have planted," or the striking words of Sir Walter, "planting and pruning trees I could work at from morning till night. There is a sort of self-congratulation, a little tickling self-flattery in the idea that while you are pleasing and amusing yourself, you are seriously contributing to the future welfare of the country."

As a result of Arbor day, talks on trees and tree-planting are now common in our best schools. Every pupil should be led to observe, recognize, and admire our common trees, and thus come to realize that they form the finest drapery that adorns this earth in all lands. Such love of trees will tend to make them practical arborists. Let the parent as well as teacher, then, encourage every child — girl or boy — to plant, to help in planting, if too young to work alone, some flower, shrub, vine, or tree, to be known by his or her name. Such offspring they will watch with pride, as every month or year new beauties appear, and find a peculiar pleasure in the parentage of trees, whether forest, fruit or ornamental, a pleasure that never cloys, but grows with their growth. Such tree-planting is a grand discipline in foresight. Mental myopia means weakness and folly, while the habit of forecasting consequences is the condition of wisdom. Many youth will sow only where they can quickly reap. With them a meagre crop soon in hand outweighs a golden harvest long in maturing. The tree-planter can appreciate the apothegm, "To patiently work and wait, year after year, for the attainment of some far-off end, shows a touch of the sublime, and implies moral no less than mental heroism."

B. G. Northrop

A FLOCK OF BIRDS

For a class of little ones

(The pupils who recite should wear appropriate colors)

1st.

I am a blue-bird; on branches bare
I love to sway like a blossom fair,
And sing to people tired of snow
The prettiest songs of spring-time I know.

2nd.

I am a robin. "To wortle, tu whit!"
Do I mind the cold weather? no, not a bit.
Gayly I'll carol and loudly shout
Till I coax the leaves and the blossoms out.

3rd.
(Yellow-bird)

My color is like the buttercups;
I love to come where the wild bee sups,
I know I've not much of a voice to sing
But I carry a sunbeam on every wing.

4th.

I'm a jolly old crow, I'd have you know,
I've sung ever since I was born;
And as for farming, I can beat
The smartest at hoeing the corn;
You don't think much of my music?
That's as much as some people know.
What sound is there in this noisy world
So sweet as the song of a crow?

5th.

I'm the oriole; see how gayly I'm dressed,
For me the blossoming orchard is best.
Oh, May is sweet, and I am sweet,
And the apple blossoms here at my feet.

6th.

I'm brisk little Robert of Lincoln!
My heart is so full and so gay
That I sing as fast as ever I can,
In the meadow-lands all day.
I love the tall lithe grasses,
And the daisies,— the dear little things —
They pay the best attention
To all a birdie sings.
Bob-o-link, bob-o-link, I'm glad, bob-o-link!
The brook says I'm pretty,
Now what do you think?

Three or more pupils:

We're the cat-birds and whip-poor-wills, but we'll not tell
The secrets we've learned in the shaded dell.

All (singing or reciting)

Come out, boys and girls, and we'll sing you a song;
Come early: We sing in the morning
When the spirits of sunrise with colors rare
Are sky and hilltops adorning.

Annie Chase

Oh! come to the woodlands, 'tis joy to behold,
The new waken'd buds in our pathway unfold;
For spring has come forth, and the bland southern breeze
Is telling the tale to the shrubs and the trees,
Which, anxious to show her
The duty they owe her
Have decked themselves gayly in emerald and gold.

SPRING

In all climates spring is beautiful. The birds begin to sing; they utter a few joyful notes, and then wait for an answer in the silent woods. Those green-coated musicians, the frogs, make holiday in the neighboring marshes. They, too, belong to the orchestra of nature, whose vast theatre is again opened, though the doors have been so long bolted with icicles, and the scenery hung with snow and frost like cobwebs. This is the prelude which announces the opening of the scene. Already the grass shoots forth, the waters leap with thrilling force through the veins of the earth, the sap through the veins of the plants and trees, and the blood through the veins of men. What a thrill of delight in spring-time! What a joy in being and moving! Men are at work in gardens, and in the air there is an odor of fresh earth. The leaf-buds begin to swell and blush. The white blossoms of the cherry hang upon the boughs like snow-flakes; and ere long our next-door neighbor will be completely hidden from us by the dense green foliage. The May-flowers open their soft blue eyes. Children are let loose in the fields and gardens. They hold buttercups under each other's chins to see if they love butter. And the little girls adorn themselves with chains and curls of dandelions; pull out the yellow leaves to see if the school-boy loves them, and blow the down from the leafless stalk to find out if their mothers want them at home. And at night so cloudless and so still! Not a voice of living thing,— not a whisper of leaf or moving bough,— not a breath of wind,— not a sound upon the earth or in the air! And overhead bends the blue sky, dewy and soft, and radiant with innumerable stars like the inverted bell of some blue flower, sprinkled with golden dust, and breathing fragrance. Or, if the heavens are overcast, it is no wild storm of wind and rain, but clouds that melt and fall in showers. One does not wish to sleep, but lies awake to hear the pleasant sound of the dropping rain.

Longfellow

THE ROSE

Rose! thou art the sweetest flower
That ever drank the ember shower;
Rose! thou art the fondest child
Of dimpled spring, the wood-nymph wild!
Even the gods who walk the sky
Are amorous of thy scented sigh;
Cupid, too, in Paphian shades,
His hair with rosy fillet braids;
Then bring me showers of roses, bring,
And shed them round me while I sing.

Moore's Odes of Anacreon

There sat I down among the fair fresh flowers,
And saw the birds come tripping from their bowers,
Where they had rested them all night; and they
Who were so joyful at the light of day,
Began to honor May with all their powers.

Wordsworth

What a noble gift to men are the forests! What a debt of gratitude and admiration we owe for their utility and their beauty! How pleasantly the shadows of the wood fall upon our heads when we turn from the glitter and turmoil of the world of man! The winds of heaven seem to linger amid their balmy branches and the sunshine falls like a blessing upon the green leaves; the wild breath of the forest, fragrant with bark and berry, fans the brow with grateful freshness; and the beautiful woodlight, neither garish nor gloomy, full of calm and peaceful influences, sheds repose over the spirit.

Susan Fenimore Cooper

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the daffodils.

Wordsworth

"There is an Arabian proverb that, with the planting of a tree, a blessing comes to him who drops the seed."

"He who plants trees loves others besides himself."

"Spring hangs her infant blossoms on the trees,
Rock'd in the cradle of the western breeze."

Cowper

The violet in her greenwood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Sir Walter Scott

A bush of May flowers with the bees about them;
Ah, sure no tasteful nook would be without them;
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,
And let long grass grow round the roots to keep them
Moist, cool and green; and shade the violets,
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.

Keats

FAMOUS AND CURIOUS TREES

(May be used as class exercise.)

The cedars of Mount Lebanon are, perhaps, the most renowned and the best known monuments in the world. Religion, poetry, and history have all united to make them famous. There are about four hundred of these trees, disposed into nine groups, now growing on Mount Lebanon. They are of various sizes, ranging up to over forty feet in girth.

A few miles out of the city of Mexico stands a gnarled old Cypress, called the tree of *Triste Noche.* It was under this tree that Cortez sat and wept on that memorable Triste Noche when driven from the Mexican capitol by the Indians.

Another interesting tree to be seen in Mexico is found at Chapultepec, that delightful summer resort of the Mexican rulers from the time of the Montezumas. The tree in question stands a few feet from the entrance way, and is draped with the lovely Spanish moss. It is also a cypress of immense size, so large that a party of thirteen could just reach around it. It is known as the tree of Montezuma, and no doubt he often sat under its shade when rusticating in this lovely spot.

Sir Philip Sidney's oak at Penhurst, which was planted at his birth; the Abbot's oak, and William the Conqueror's oak at Windsor Park, are famous trees in English history.

But aside from historical trees there are many others that attract our attention from their great size or curious properties. Among the former are the wonderful trees of California, some of which are from three to five hundred feet in height and twenty to twenty-five feet in diameter. A section of one of these trees was at one time exhibited at San Francisco, in which was a room carpeted, and containing a piano and seats for forty people; a hundred and forty children once filled the room without crowding.

Among curious trees may be mentioned the cow tree, or Palo de Vaca of the Cordilleras, which grows at a height of three thousand feet above sea level. It is a lofty tree with laurel-like leaves, and though receiving no moisture for seven months of the year, when its trunk is tapped a beautiful stream of milk bursts forth. It flows most freely at sunrise, when the natives may be seen coming from all directions with pans and pails to catch the milk, which is said to have a pleasant sweet taste but becomes thick and yellow in a short time and soon turns into cheese.

Then there is the Bread Fruit tree, one of the most curious as well as useful trees of the Pacific islands. The fruit, which is about the size of a cocoanut, should be gathered before it is ripe, and be baked like hoe-cake. When properly cooked it resembles and tastes like good wheat bread.

Another very curious tree is the Candle-nut tree, of the South Sea islands, the fruit of which is heart-shaped and about the size of a walnut. From the fruit is obtained an oil used both for food and light. The natives of the Society islands remove the shell and slightly bake the kernels, which they string on rushes and keep to be used as torches. Five or six in a Screw Pine leaf are said to give a brilliant light.

Hon. CHARLES R. SKINNER

Supt. of Public Instruction, Albany, N. Y.:

DEAR SIR:

I think you could do much good if, when you make out your exercises for Arbor day, you would call the attention of the teachers and pupils of the public schools to the destruction of trees, shrubs, and wild flowers by persons who thoughtlessly break off branches of showy flowering trees and shrubs, and who pull up flowers by the roots or pick so many that none are left to bear seed.

It is almost impossible to produce the best results in parks, as so many seemingly intelligent persons destroy the plants of various kinds by their desire to get the flowers, and in the country so many persons destroy the wild flowers by picking too many of them. It is of more importance to teach persons to preserve what trees, shrubs, and flowers we have, than to teach them to plant trees. The pupils might, with advantage, make visits to fine trees that we have growing in the parks and learn to admire and love them.

Yours truly

(Signed.) C. C. LANEY

Supt. of Parks

Rochester, N. Y.

CHILDREN TAUGHT TO LOVE BIRDS

In almost every civilized country there are societies for the protection of birds, but Italy, which was the first foreign country to follow the example set in the United States of setting apart a day for special observance in arboriculture, and which largely based her methods upon the Arbor day practices of this state, is the first country to make an organized effort to enlist the sympathies of school children in that direction.

Dr Vitelanio Tonta recently pointed out to the leading Italian teachers that little children could easily be taught to love birds, and that this lesson, once learned, would never be forgotten, whereas, if the lesson were not taught until the children were grown up, little heed would be paid to it except by those persons who were naturally sympathetic and fond of dumb creatures.

In Germany, France, and England, he said, there are many persons who are interested in birds and who are doing what they can to prevent their being killed for the sake of their plumage, but in order to do really effectual work a more thorough crusade is needed, and it is only from the ranks of children that crusaders of the right type can be obtained.

The doctor's suggestion has attracted much attention, and many think it would be well for teachers throughout the country to carry it into effect. This they could easily do by simply impressing on the minds of their pupils that it is wrong to be cruel to birds and all innocent, helpless creatures.

THE STORY OF A LEAF

I am only a leaf. My house is one of the great trees that grow near the schoolhouse. All winter I was wrapped up in a tiny, warm blanket, tucked in a little, brown cradle, and rocked by the winds as they blew. Do you not believe it, little reader? What I say is true. Next fall just break off a branch of a tree and see if you can not find a leaf-bud on it. It will look just like a little brown knot. Break it open and inside you will see some soft, white down; that is the blanket. The brown shell that you break is the cradle.

Well, as I was telling you, I was rocked all winter in my cradle on the branch. When the warm days came, and the soft rains fell, then I grew very fast indeed. I soon pushed myself out of my cradle, dropped my blanket, and showed my pretty green dress to all who came by. O, how glad everyone was to see me! And here I am, so happy, with my little brothers and sisters about me! Every morning the birds come and sing to us, the great sun shines upon us, and the winds fan us. We dance with the winds, or smile back at the bright sun, and make a pleasant shade for the dear birds. Every day, happy, laughing school-children pass under our tree.

We are always glad to see you, boys and girls, glad to see your bright eyes, and hear you say "How beautiful the leaves are!"

Rebecca D. Rickoff

One impulse from a vernal wood,
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Wordsworth

PLANT A TREE

He who plants a tree
Plants a hope
Rootlets up through fibres blindly grope;
Leaves unfold into horizons free.
So man's life must climb
From the clods of time
Unto heavens sublime.
Canst thou prophesy, thou little tree,
What the glory of thy boughs shall be?

He who plants a tree
Plants a joy;
Plants a comfort that will never cloy.
Every day a fresh reality,
Beautiful and strong
To whose shelter throng
Creatures blithe with song.
If thou couldst but know, thou happy tree,
Of the bliss that shalt inhabit thee.

He who plants a tree
He plants peace.
Under its green curtains jargons cease,
Leaf and zephyr murmur soothingly;
Shadows soft with sleep
Down tired eyelids creep
Balm of slumber deep.
Never hast thou dreamed, thou blessed tree,
Of the benediction thou shalt be.

He who plants a tree
He plants youth;
Vigor won for centuries in sooth;
Life of time, that hints eternity!
Boughs their strength uprear,
New shoots every year
On old growth appear.
Thou shalt teach the ages, sturdy tree,
Youth of soul is immortality.

He who plants a tree
He plants love;
Tents of coolness spreading out above
Wayfarers, he may not live to see.
Gifts that grow are best,
Hands that bless are blest;
Plant; life does the rest —
Heaven and earth help him who plants a tree,
And his work its own reward shall be.

Lucy Larcom

MAY

I feel a newer life in every gale;
The winds that fan the flowers,
And with their welcome breathings fill the sail,
Tell of serener hours —
Of hours that glide unfelt away
Beneath the sky of May.

The spirit of the gentle south-wind calls
From his blue throne of air,
And where his whispering voice in music falls,
Beauty is budding there;
The bright ones of the valley break
Their slumbers, and awake.

The waving verdure rolls along the plain,
And the wide forest weaves,
To welcome back its playful mates again,
A canopy of leaves,
And from its darkening shadows floats
A gush of trembling notes.

Fairer and brighter spreads the reign of May;
The tresses of the woods
With the light dallying of the west-wind play;
And the full-brimming floods,
As gladly to their goal they run,
Hail the returning Sun.

James G. Percival

PLANTED

I held my baby on my knee,
My blue-eyed Bessie, three years old;
She laid her dimpled cheek on mine,
And in my ear her trouble told.

"Papa, pease may me go to school,
Like Sister Nell and Katie Snow?"
Then as I smiled she begged again,
With kisses sweet, "Pease may me go?"

"When Bessie grows as large as Nell,
Then she may go to school", I said.
"But mother's words and father's rules
Are quite enough for this small head."

She said no more, but sat awhile
"Thinking her think", then ran away;
And as I turned to work again,
I heard her in the yard at play.

Then mother called, "Come, Bessie, come;
'Tis time to go to sleep, you know."
"O dear mamma, pease let me stay!
I'se panted, 'tause I want to grow."

'Twas true! for there she stood,
With feet fast planted in the ground,
While water-pot and garden-tool,
Ready for use, lay scattered round.

On mother's second call she came,
With rumpled dress and muddy shoe,
And, looking up quite grieved, she said,
"Why tan't me grow, as flowers do?"

THE TREE

I love thee when thy swelling buds appear,
And one by one their tender leaves unfold,
As if they knew that warmer suns were near,
Nor longer sought to hide from winter's cold;
And when with darker growth thy leaves are seen
To veil from view the early robin's nest,
I love to lie beneath thy waving screen,
With limbs by summer's heat and toil oppressed;
And when the autumn winds have stript thee bare,
And round thee lies the smooth, untrodden snow,
When nought is thine that made thee once so fair,
I love to watch thy shadowy form below,
And through thy leafless arms to look above
On stars that brighter beam when most we need their love.

Jones Very

WHAT IS THE SONG THE SWALLOWS SING

What is the song the swallows sing,
  When skies are blue, and May is here,
And when they haste on joyful wing,
  To tell that summer-time is near?
The primrose comes to greet the spring;
  The roses bloom on every hand,
What message do the swallows bring,
  Returning from a fairer land?
Among the trees and in the air,
  They come to us, a merry throng,
And, as we listen to them there,
  What is their song? What is their song?
"Farewell, farewell, unto that distant clime,
  Where once we dwelt and memory is sweet,
And welcome, welcome to the fair spring-time
  That waits us in the land that now we greet."

Harry B. Smith

ALMOST TIME

Almost time for the pretty white daisies
  Out of their sleep to awaken at last
And over the meadows with grasses and clover,
  To bud and to blossom, and grow so fast;
Almost time for the buttercups yellow,
  The ferns and the flowers, the roses and all,
To waken from slumber, and merrily listen
  To gladden our hearts at the spring's first call.

Almost time for the skies to grow bluer,
  And breezes to soften, and days to grow long;
For eyes to grow brighter, and hearts to grow gladder
  And earth to rejoice in her jubilant song;
Almost time for the sweetest of seasons;
  Nearer it comes with each new-born day,
And soon the smile of the beautiful spring time
  Winter's cold shadow will chase away.

Selected

Ye field flowers! the gardens eclipse you 'tis true;
  Yet, wildings of nature, I dote upon you;
    For ye waft me to summers of old,
When the earth teemed around me with fairy delight,
And when daisies and buttercups gladdened my sight,
  Like treasures of silver and gold.

Campbell

THE AWAKENING YEAR

The bluebirds and the violets
  Are with us once again,
And promises of summer spot
  The hillside and the plain.

The clouds around the mountain tops
  Are riding on the breeze,
Their trailing azure trains of mist
  Are tangled in the trees.

The snowdrifts, which have lain so long
  Haunting the hidden nooks,
Like guilty ghosts have slipped away,
  Unseen, into the brooks.

The streams are fed with generous rains,
  They drink the wayside springs,
And flutter down from crag to crag,
  Upon their foaming wings.

Through all the long, wet nights they brawl
  By mountain homes remote,
Till woodmen in their sleep behold
  Their ample rafts afloat.

The lazy wheel that hung so dry
  Above the idle stream,
Whirls wildly in the misty dark,
  And through the miller's dream.

Loud torrent unto torrent calls,
  Till, at the mountain's feet,
Flashing afar their spectral light,
  The noisy waters meet.

They meet, and through the lowlands sweep
  Toward briny bay and lake,
Proclaiming to the distant towns,
  "The country is awake".

Thomas Buchanan Read

Welcome, pure thoughts! welcome, ye silent groves!
These guests, these courts, my soul most dearly loves;
  Now the winged people of the sky shall sing
My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring;
  And if contentment be a stranger,— then
I'll ne'er look for it, but in heaven again.

Sir Henry Wotton

How dreary would the garden be,
  With all its flowery trees,
Suppose there were no butterflies,
  And suppose there were no bees.

Alice Cary

THE RETURN OF THE BIRDS

I hear, from many a little throat,
  A warble interrupted long;
I hear the robin's flute-like note,
  The blue-bird's slenderer song.

Brown meadows and the russet hill,
  Not yet the haunt of grazing herds,
And thickets by the glimmering rill,
  Are all alive with birds.

Bryant

WHAT ROBIN TOLD

How do the robins build their nests?
  Robin Redbreast told me.
First a wisp of amber bay
  In a pretty round they lay,
Then some shreds of downy floss,
  Feathers, too, and bits of moss,
Woven with a sweet, sweet song,
Tbis way, that way, and across,
  That's what robin told me.

Where do robins build their nests?
  Robin Redbreast told me.
Up among tbe leaves so deep,
  Where the sunbeams rarely creep;
Long before tbe winds are cold,
  Long before the leaves are gold,
Bright-eyed stars will peep, and see
  Baby robins, one, two, three;
  Tbat's what robin told me.

George Cooper

SONG OF THE ROSE

If Zeus chose us a King of the flowers in his mirth
He would call to the rose and would royally crown it;
For the rose, ho, the rose! is the grace of the earth,
Is the light of the plants that are growing upon it!
For the rose, ho, the rose! is the eye of the flowers,
Is the flush of the meadows that feel themselves fair,—
Is the lightning of beauty, that strikes through the bowers
On pale lovers that sit in the glow unaware.
Ho, the rose breathes of love! ho, the rose lifts the cup
To the red eyes of Cypris invoked for a guest!
Ho, the rose having curled its sweet leaves for the world
Takes delight in the motion its petals keep up,
As they laugh to the wind as it laughs from the west.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

MAY

May is here!
I know there's a blossom somewhere near,
For the south wind tosses into my room
A hint of summer — a vague perfume
It has pilfered somewhere (I can not tell
Whether from pansy or pimpernel).

But it sets me dreaming of birds and bees,
And the odorous snowstorms of apple trees,
Of roses sweet by the garden wall,
And milk-white lilies, stately and tall;
Of clover red in the morning sun,
And withered and dead when the day is done;
Of the song that the stalwart mower sings,
Of gladness and beauty and all sweet things
  Tbat summer brings.

Eben E. Rexford

I know not which I love the most,
  Nor which tbe comeliest shows,
The timid, bashful violet,
  Or tbe royal hearted rose:

The pansy in her simple dress,
  The pink with cheek of red,
Or the faint, fair heliotrope, who hangs,
  Like a bashful maid, her head.

For I love and prize you one and all,
  From the least low bloom of spring,
To the lily fair, whose clothes outshine
  The raiment of a king.

Phoebe Cary

BIRDS IN SUMMER

How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Flitting about in each leafy tree,
In the leafy trees, so broad and tall,
Like a green and beautiful palace hall,
With its airy chambers, light and boon,
That open to sun and stars and moon!
That open unto the bright blue sky,
And the frolicsome winds as they wander by!

They have their nests in the forest bough,
Those homes of delight they need not now;
And the young and the old they wander out,
And traverse their green world round about;
And hark! at the top of this leafy hall,
How one to the other they lovingly call:
"Come up, come up!" they seem to say,
"When the topmost twigs in the breezes sway,"

"Come up, come up! for the world is fair,
When the merry leaves dance in the summer air,"
And the birds below give back the cry,
"We come, we come to the branches high!"
How pleasant the life of a bird must be,
Flitting about in each leafy tree;
And away through the air what joy to go,
And to look on the bright green earth below!

What joy it must be, like a living breeze,
To flutter about 'mid the flowering trees;
Lightly to soar, and to see beneath
The wastes of the blossoming purple heath,
And the yellow furze, like fields of gold,
That gladdened some fairy region old!
On the mountain tops, on the billowy sea,
On the leafy stems of the forest tree,
How pleasant the life of a bird must be!

Mrs Hemans

Do you ne'er think what wondrous beings these?
Do you ne'er think who made them, and who taught
The dialect they speak, where melodies
Alone are the interpreters of thought?
Whose household words are songs in many keys,
Sweeter than instrument of man e'er caught!

Longfellow

THE WIND

The wind has a language, I would I could learn;
Sometimes 'tis soothing, and sometimes 'tis stern;
Sometimes it comes like a low, sweet song,
And all things grow calm as the sound floats along;
And the forest is lulled by the dreamy strain;
And slumber sinks down on the wandering main,
And its crystal arms are folded in rest,
And the tall ship sleeps on its heaving breast.

Letitia Elizabeth Landon

Where fall the tears of love the rose appears,
And where the ground is bright with friendship's tear,
Forget-me-nots, and violets heavenly blue,
Spring glittering with the cheerful drops like dew.

Bryant